

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 26. (Currently amended) A process for making a container from a polyester(s) polymer, comprising

feeding polyester particles having a degree of crystallinity of at least 15% and an It.V. of at least 0.70 dL/g to an extrusion zone,

melting the particles in the extrusion zone to form a molten polyester polymer composition, and

forming a sheet or a molded part from extruded molten polyester polymer,

wherein the absolute value of the difference in the It.V. between the center and the surface of the polyester particles fed to the extrusion zone is less than 0.25 dL/g, have an It.V. at their surface which is less than 0.25 dL/g higher than the It.V. at their center and

the polyester particles are not solid state polymerized before introducing said particles into the extrusion zone, and the polyester particles have an acetaldehyde level of 10 ppm or less before introducing said particles into the extrusion zone.

Claim 27. (Currently amended) The process of claim 26, wherein the absolute difference is less than 0.20 dL/g the It.V. at the surface of the particles is less than 0.20 dL/g higher than the It.V. at the center of the particles.

Claim 28. (Currently amended) The process of claim 27, wherein the ~~wherein the~~ absolute difference between the It.V. of the particles at their surface and their center is 0.10 dL/g or less.

Claim 29. (Currently amended) The process of claim 28, wherein the absolute difference is 0.05 dL/g or less.

Claim 30. (Original) The process of claim 26, wherein the molded part is a container preform.

Claim 31. (Original) The process of claim 30, comprising stretch blow molding the preform into a beverage container.

Claim 32. (Original) The process of claim 31, wherein the container has a volume of 3

liters or less.

Claim 33. (Currently amended) The process of claim ~~27~~26, comprising drying the particles in a drying zone at temperature of at least 140°C before melting the particles in the extrusion zone.

Claim 34. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, further comprising drying the particles before feeding the particles to the extrusion zone, wherein the particles are not solid state polymerized before drying.

Claim 35. (Cancelled) ~~The process of claim 34, wherein the particles have an acetaldehyde level of 10 ppm or less prior to melting in the extrusion zone.~~

Claim 36. (Original) The process of claim 26, wherein the polyester polymer particles comprise:

(a) a carboxylic acid component comprising at least 90 mole% of the residues of terephthalic acid, or derivatives of terephthalic acid, or mixtures thereof, and

(b) a hydroxyl component comprising at least 90 mole% of the residues of ethylene glycol,

based on 100 mole percent of the carboxylic acid component residues and 100 mole percent hydroxyl component residues in the polyester polymer, and at least 75% of the polyester polymer is virgin polymer.

Claim 37. (Original) The process of claim 36, wherein the polyester polymer particles comprises:

(a) a carboxylic acid component comprising at least 92 mole% of the residues of terephthalic acid, or derivatives of terephthalic acid, or mixtures thereof, and

(b) a hydroxyl component comprising at least 92 mole% of the residues of ethylene glycol,

based on 100 mole percent of the carboxylic acid component residues and 100 mole percent hydroxyl component residues in the polyester polymer.

Claim 38. (Currently amended) The process of claim ~~36~~26, wherein the degree of crystallinity is at least 25%.

Claim 39. (Currently amended) The process of claim ~~38~~26, wherein the degree of crystallinity is at least 35%.

Claim 40. (Original) The process of claim 26, comprising a bulk of said particles having a volume of at least 1 cubic meter.

Claims 41 - 53 (Cancelled)

Claim 54. (Currently amended) The process of claim 36, wherein the ~~article~~ molded part formed from the polyester polymer composition in the extrusion zone is a preform.

Claim 55. (Previously presented) The process of claim 54, wherein the preform is stretch blow molded into a beverage container.

Claim 56. (Cancelled) ~~The process of claim 36, wherein the particles have an acetaldehyde level of 10 ppm or less prior to melting in the extrusion zone.~~

Claim 57. (Currently amended) The process of claim ~~56~~26, wherein the absolute difference between the It.V. of the particles at their surface and at their center is 0.05 dL/g or less.

Claim 58. (Previously presented) The process of claim 57, wherein the polyester particles introduced into the extrusion zone have a degree of crystallinity of at least 35 percent.

Claim 59. (Previously presented) The process of claim 36, wherein polyester particles having a degree of crystallinity of at least 25 percent and an It.V. of at least 0.75 dL/g obtained without solid state polymerization and having an It.V. at their surface which is less than 0.20 dL/g higher than the It.V. at the center of the particles are fed to said extrusion zone, melted to form said polyester polymer composition, and formed into a bottle preform.

Claim 60. (Previously presented) The process of claim 59, wherein the degree of crystallinity is at least 35 percent, the It.V. is at least 0.77 dL/g.

Claim 61. (Previously presented) The process of claim 60, wherein the difference between the It.V. of the particles at their surface is less than 0.05 dL/g higher than the It.V. at their center.

Claims 62-94 (Cancelled)

Claim 95. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles are obtained from underwater pelletizers.

~~Claim 96. (Cancelled) The process of claim 95, wherein said particles fed to the extrusion zone have an acetaldehyde level of 10 ppm or less.~~

Claim 97. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein said particles fed to the extrusion zone comprise spherical particles.

Claim 98. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles contain phosphorus.

Claim 99. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles are obtained by polycondensing in the presence of a catalyst comprising titanium.

Claim 100. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles are obtained by polycondensing in the presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of titanium.

Claim 101. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles are obtained by polycondensing in the presence of a catalyst comprising antimony.

Claim 102. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles are obtained by polycondensing in the presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of antimony.

Claim 103. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles contain a reheat rate enhancing aid.

Claim 104. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the reheat enhancing aid comprises elemental antimony, carbon black, graphite, or black iron oxide.

Claim 105. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles comprise strain crystallized polyester polymers.

Claim 106. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles are dried at a temperature of 140°C or more prior to feeding the particles into the extrusion zone.

Claim 107. (Previously presented) The process of claim 106, wherein the particles are dried at a gas flow rate of 0.2 to 5 scfm per lb/hr.

Claim 108. (Currently amended) The process of claim 26, wherein a metal deactivator is added to a melt phase for making the polyester polymer particles ~~the particles contain a metal deactivator.~~

Claim 109. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, comprising injection molding the molten polyester polymer to form a container suitable for heat set beverage bottles.

Claim 110. (Previously presented) The process of anyone of claims 97-109, wherein the particles are obtained from underwater pelletizers.

Claim 111. (Previously presented) The process of anyone of claim 95-96 and 98-109, wherein the particles are spherical.

Claim 112. (Previously presented) The process of anyone of claim 95-104 and 106-109, wherein the particles comprise strain crystallized polyester polymers.

Claim 113. (Previously presented) The process of anyone of claims 95-97 and 99-109, wherein the particles contain phosphorus.

Claim 114. (Previously presented) The process of anyone of claim 95-109, wherein the particles fed to the extrusion zone have an acetaldehyde level of 2 ppm or less.

Claim 115. (Previously presented) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles have an It.V. of at least 0.80 dL/g.

Claim 116. (New) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles have an acetaldehyde level of 5 ppm or less before introducing said particles into the extrusion zone.

Claim 117. (New) The process of claim 26, wherein the particles have an acetaldehyde level of 2 ppm or less before introducing said particles into the extrusion zone.

Claim 118. (New) The process of claim 116, wherein the degree of crystallinity is at least 40%.

Claim 119. (New) The process of claim 26, wherein the degree of crystallinity is at least 40%.

Claim 120. (New) The process of claim 26, wherein the absolute difference is less than 0.15 dL/g.

Claim 121. (New) The process of claim 118, wherein the absolute difference is less than 0.05 dL/g.

Claim 122. (New) A process for making a container from a polyester(s) polymer, comprising

feeding spherical polyester particles having a degree of crystallinity of at least 15% and an It.V. of at least 0.70 dL/g to an extrusion zone,

melting the spherical particles in the extrusion zone to form a molten polyester polymer composition, and

forming a sheet or a molded part from extruded molten polyester polymer,

wherein the absolute value of the difference in the It.V. between the center and the surface of the spherical polyester particles fed to the extrusion zone is less than 0.25 dL/g, and the spherical polyester particles are not solid state polymerized before introducing said particles into the extrusion zone, and the spherical polyester polymer particles comprise:

(a) a carboxylic acid component comprising at least 92 mole% of the residues of terephthalic acid, or derivatives of terephthalic acid, or mixtures thereof, and

(b) a hydroxyl component comprising at least 92 mole% of the residues of ethylene glycol,  
based on 100 mole percent of the carboxylic acid component residues and 100 mole percent hydroxyl component residues in the polyester.

Claim 123. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the degree of crystallinity of the polyester particles is at least 40%.

Claim 124. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the absolute value of the difference in the It.V. between the center and the surface of the polyester particles fed to the extrusion zone is less than 0.05 dL/g.

Claim 125. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the particles are dried at a gas flow rate of 0.2 to 5 scfm per lb/hr.

Claim 126. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein a metal deactivator is added to a melt phase for making the polyester polymer particles.

Claim 127. (New) The process of claim 122, comprising injection molding the molten polyester polymer to form a container suitable for heat set beverage bottles.

Claim 128. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the particles are obtained from underwater pelletizers.

Claim 129. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the particles comprise strain crystallized polyester polymers.

Claim 130. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the particles have an acetaldehyde level of 2 ppm or less.

Claim 131. (New) The process of claim 122, wherein the It.V. of the polyester particles fed to the extrusion zone is 0.80 dL/g or more.